

THE STATE OF EUROPE.

From Our Own Correspondent.

TURIN, Jan. 12, 1861.

The French fleet has at last left Gaeta, and about the time of the elections for the Italian Parliament we may hear of the flight of Francis II. and the surrender of his famous fortress. It was high time that such an event should come, if only to place the Cabinet of Turin in a better position, since the support granted by the French Emperor to the ex-King of Naples was a serious injury to the popularity of Count Cavour and of the French alliance, while it gave strength to Garibaldi and to his independent policy, centering all hopes exclusively upon Italy and her resources. As to my personal views I side rather with the hero of Capri than with the Diplomatist of the Piazza di Castello. Still, as all the conservative and moderate portion of Italian society support Cavour and implicitly trusts his policy, a conflict with Garibaldi would lead to a revolution; and Italy is not yet strong enough to face at the same time a foreign war and civil commotions. Cavour himself feels keenly this critical position, and tries therefore to come to terms with Garibaldi. But it is a difficult task, since the hero, without caring much for diplomacy, insists upon beginning the war in Spring. The Government has slighted him at Naples, removed all his friends from places of trust, encouraged the disbanding of his army, and endeavored rather to conciliate the Bourbonists than to lean upon the Garibaldians. Now that Farini in Naples and La Farina in Sicily have completely failed, the organs of the Government preach peace and concord with Garibaldi, but upon condition that he shall subordinate himself to Count Cavour and give up all his adventurous plans. Napoleon is fully satisfied that the coming war cannot be localized, and must soon extend beyond the boundaries of Italy; but even he does not feel strong enough for a great European conflict, and therefore gave his instructions to Count Cavour not to allow an attack upon Venice or any Austrian province. The most serious difficulty would at once be removed could the scheme of the sale of Venice be carried; but Francis Joseph is stubborn, and refuses to listen to the advice of public opinion in France, England, and Russia. Lord Palmerston built his scheme of European reconciliation upon the supposition that Count Rechberg, the reactionary Minister of Foreign Affairs, could not maintain his position while the system which he represented was abandoned as regards Hungary and even the non-Hungarian Provinces. Count Masdort, the nephew to King Leopold of Belgium, and cousin to the Queen of England, was to supersede Count Rechberg, and it was known that he favored the idea of a cession; but Rechberg's position proved to be too strong for any intrigues to the contrary. He kept his post, and England now sees that it would be in vain to propose a solution so strongly repugnant to the tastes of Francis Joseph that he takes it for a personal insult.

How long this state of things may last it is difficult to predict. The silent, underground war between Schmerling and the Hungarian Ministry on one side, and Rechberg and the backstairs influence on the other, cannot cease before one or the other party is completely defeated, and withdraws from the contest. The Hungarians will take advantage of the situation, and put themselves in possession of all their rights, as they were determined by the laws of 1848. No body pays taxes, and all the country waits anxiously for the meeting of Parliament, which probably is to take place on April 22 at Pesth. Should, in the mean time, a war break out between Austria and Italy, the Parliament will probably become revolutionary; should, on the other hand, Venice be sold, or Italy keep her peace, then we do not think a reconciliation between Austria and Hungary to be impossible. If Francis Joseph grants an independent Ministry to Hungary, he will be crowned with the crown of St. Stephen, and at last become the legal Sovereign of Hungary.

The coming months are most critical for the state of Europe. Napoleon arms, and recommends a Congress for settling the pending questions; England is uneasy; the new King of Prussia, William I., declares, in his first manifesto to his nation, that the confidence of Europe is shaken; Bavaria prepares for war, and Austria is still in the convulsions of a financial and political crisis. Russia, though deeply engaged in the immediate emancipation of the serfs, concentrates an army on the Pruth, and threatens Moldo-Wallachia with an invasion in case the Hungarians should try to organize an inroad from the Principalities into Transylvania. Prince Couza suddenly turns round, and, after having for a time favored the schemes of Hungary, proclaims now the strictest neutrality, and expels the Hungarian refugees. The Prince of Serbia is likewise frightened, and no longer dares to put himself in opposition to Austria and Russia. But Bosnia, Bulgaria, and Montenegro, are still agitated, and it is scarcely possible that the year 1861 will pass away without serious commotions in European Turkey. Beside these greater questions, there remains still the squabble about Schleswig-Holstein and the Constitution of Hesse, which may be made a pretext, both by Napoleon and Czar Alexander, for disturbing the state of Germany. I need not say that the American difficulties greatly influence the money market, and there is an uneasy feeling prevalent that Europe is on the brink of a great war or of a revolution.

FROM JAPAN.

ARRIVAL OF THE NIAGARA WITH THE EMBASSY.

From Our Own Correspondent.

KANAGAWA, Nov. 15, 1860.

Just nine months to a day and an hour since the Japanese-American Embassadors embarked in the Powhatan at Yeddo, the Niagara with the returned Envoys was seen steaming up Yeddo Bay. Nine months was the duration of absence allotted by the Japanese Government, and I half suspect it must have been a nice calculation of Capt. McKean that, as the last hour of the prescribed time ticked off, the Niagara dropped her anchor in sight of the imperial city at 3 p. m. of the 9th inst. There need be no *hara kiri* on the part of the *kamis* for overstaying time. Abreast of Yokohama the Niagara lay to for an hour, to bring the mails ashore and to communicate with the Japanese authorities. A few of the inferiors of the Embassy landed here, some of whom at once accompanied Lieut. Guest overland to Yeddo, to announce the arrival. At Yokohama the greatest indifference was manifested on the part of the Japanese. No boat put off to welcome the returned Envoys, and not so much as the ragged

urchin stared at the half dozen who came ashore at this place. A few boatmen and laborers gathered on the beach to look at the "big ship," and not at the big men, but not a wearer of two swords was visible. At the Custom-House, which fronts the landing wharves, there was no stir. The American residents had all the enthusiasm to themselves, and went about to give greeting to the Niagara and her officers. They found the apathetic Japanese walking quietly about, placidly smoking, and Master Tommy with apparently the same old dirt on his neck and hands with which he had departed.

At Yeddo, there was the same indifference. The Envoys landed, and were swallowed up in the city's crowds, just the same as if they had disembarked from a junk from Hakodadi or Nagasaki. In parting from Capt. McKean and the officers of the Niagara, they exhibited more feeling than they have ever before manifested, some tears even wetting their apathetic cheeks. Such has been the entrance and exit of the first Imperial Embassy from long-secluded Japan—an event that will mark an epoch of the future history of the nation.

The Japanese Government are disposed to return some of the civilities received. A temple is set apart for the use of the officers of the Niagara while at Yeddo. Officials, servants, and horses will be supplied unlimitedly, as well as provisions during their stay and for their return outfit, all free of cost. The numerous and costly presents have not yet been landed from the Niagara. Their quantity and bulk requires some previous arrangement for them.

The Niagara will remain till the latter part of the month, when she returns to Hong Kong to take Minister Ward to Aden, so far on his return. The Hartford had been previously detailed for this duty. The Hartford arrived here on the 29th ult. Flag-officer Stribling visited Mr. Harris at Yeddo, and left again with the Hartford on the 6th for Hong Kong.

The Saginaw, Capt. Schenck, arrived on the 4th inst., expecting to take Mr. Harris to Hakodadi and the West Coast, to ascertain if a better harbor than Neagata, the one proposed to be opened under the treaty, might not be had. A bar across the mouth of Neagata harbor is said to obstruct all vessels drawing over nine feet. The season is so advanced, however, that the Saginaw is deemed unfit for such a voyage during the rough wintry gales of this coast. She is very wet and every way uncomfortable in bad weather. The Saginaw returns to China, therefore, to-day, via Nagasaki.

The Prussian frigate *Arcona* and *Thetis* are still at Yeddo. Count Enlenberg gets no treaty yet. Prussian officers on different occasions have received marked insult in the streets. A few days ago, the captain of one of the frigates, while riding through Yeddo, accompanied by a lieutenant, was so menaced by a party of Japanese soldiers that both were compelled to seek refuge in a neighboring shop. The guard of officials who were escorting them afforded them no protection, and refused the use of their own swords to the officers, who had chanced to come ashore for the first time unarmed.

A party of officers and gentlemen from the Saginaw were similarly menaced by a small body of drunken sword-bearers, but were both too numerous and well armed for any open violence to be done to them.

A fortnight since, a more serious assault was made on an attaché of the French Legation, who was sitting within his own premises, quietly smoking and playing with his dog. A two-sworded man crossed the street, entered within the outer gate of the Legation, and wantonly kicked the dog. Three Japanese *yakuins*, or officials, belonging to the Legation guard, stood by, and remonstrated with the man, who thereupon recrossed the street, but, again returning, before the Frenchman could anticipate his design, drew his sword, and wounded him severely near the shoulder, then turned and fled. The wounded man made one ineffectual discharge from his revolver, and the would-be assassin escaped, though within arm's reach of three *yakuins*, and though a large body more of them were within easy call. The assailant had not the slightest provocation, or even the plea of drunkenness, for an apology. This, like all other assaults, was made by the follower of some prince, too powerful for the Imperial Government to punish in the person of one of his humblest servants. Such is the explanation the Japanese themselves give. This time the blow has fallen where the most ample atonement must be made. Mons. Belcour, the French Chargé d'Affaires, is acting promptly in the case, and fortunately there is a large fleet in the Chinese waters to support any demands he may make. It is only at Yeddo, a city full of feudal chiefs and their retainers, that these disturbances occur. Elsewhere quiet prevails.

THE OPERA IN BROOKLYN.

SICILIAN VESPERS.

The charming Alhambra-like Opera House was filled on Monday night, with a most Parisian-looking audience, the evening toilettes of the women, and the dress-coats and cravats of the men considered. These outer signs of an inward grace have been very largely discarded in the Fourteenth Street Academy, and "loud" trousers and heavy coats, and neckcloths of the out-door pattern reign: the result is a lower tone in the disposition of fashion there, with extenuated attractions. For the world cannot do without symbols; and dress as a fine art is essential to civilization. Well, under the influence of this idea, the new Opera House over the water sparkled with elegance and good taste; and the plan of the building, and disposition of the boxes favoring a generous display of the audience, no flower blushed unseen on the occasion.

The Sicilian Vespers was written originally to a French text for a French audience at the Grand Opera, Paris; and the theory there is, that music is an intellectual thing, and requires consideration above and beyond the spontaneous acceptations of melody. The result is, that the Sicilian Vespers, as a whole, must be heard several times, to make itself adequately understood. There are two pieces certainly, a duet and final air for soprano, that please at once, and are always encored; but there are others which would be liked more after repetitions. The singers gave great satisfaction. M. Ferri has recovered his voice, which at one time seemed damaged. Madame Colson was applauded in her best scenes. M. Brignoli sang with his customary effect. M. Susini was a little hoarse at times. The artists are all much pleased with their success in Brooklyn.

Miss Hinkley will appear to-night in the *Troatore*.

FROM BERLIN.—By the late Princess Royal we have Bermuda papers to Jan. 15.

A brilliant meteor passed over Bermuda on the 5th, exploding some distance from land with a terrific report. Arrived on the 9th, brig *Henrietta*, Hodge, New-York.

Mr. De Cordova will repeat his poem "The Prince of Wales's Visit," at Irving Hall, to-morrow night, in aid of the funds of the Hebrew Relief Society.

THE PRO-SLAVERY REBELLION.

THE CONDITION OF FORT SUMTER.

The Secessionists Wavering.

AFFAIRS IN MARYLAND.

LETTER FROM J. MINOR BOTTS.

FROM SOUTH CAROLINA.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE—SUMTER RE-ENFORCED.

From Our Own Correspondent.

CHARLESTON, S. C., Jan. 26, 1861.

The *Courier* and *The Mercury* seem to be perplexed about your correspondent, and affect to believe that my letters are written not in Charleston, but in New-York. If this conclusion is satisfactory to them, it certainly should be to me. Now, I propose to employ a simple test, which may serve to enlighten my editorial friends here on the point whether or not I am actually in Charleston. I take the weather—my allusion to which on a previous occasion seems to have provoked the criticism of *The Washington Star*—about which I cannot, of course, speak correctly if I write in New-York. Will the editors of *The Courier* and *The Mercury*, therefore, consult their recollection, and that of their anxious friends likewise, if they please, and decide whether what I now write does not render it exceedingly probable that I am actually in rebellious Charleston. Early this morning—from five to six o'clock—it rained like great guns, as it has done for the last four mornings; for two hours after it misted in a threatening way; at ten it gave tokens of clearing up; the wind shifted from the north-east to the south-west; patches of sunshine struggled through the clouds; the smart breeze caused the haze to lift, so as to disclose the exact position of the steamer *Columbia*, hard on the bar, abreast of Sullivan's Island, a short distance below Fort Moultrie, from which position she failed to get away, as was expected, at the early morning tide; speculations were afloat on the dock whether the vessel would be able to get off without removing her cargo; at eleven the weather threatened again, was overcast, and threatened to rain, rather sultry, with intervals of mist and a little sun, till 12 m., at which time I write.

There, if this circumstantial statement is really drawn out in New-York, then the editors of *The Courier* and *The Mercury* must confess that *THE TRIBUNE* has no need hereafter of sending their correspondents out of New-York City to know what is actually going on abroad.

The intervals of sunshine at which the haze lifted from the lower harbor, enabled the "unarmed eye" to see the flags from Forts Sumter, Moultrie, Pinckney, Johnson, and one or two of the batteries. I fancied that I could see the drenched and dull surfaces of thousands

of muskets, forming a circle of half a dozen miles around Fort Sumter, every man with the thumb of his right hand to his nose, the thumb of his left hand to the little finger of the right, both hands spread like a fan, making ridiculous motions, in as much bewilderment as ever was the renowned Antony the Trumpeter. This is all that the poor fellows—the cavalry of South Carolina—can do, in spite of their much boasting about taking Fort Sumter. Meanwhile, *The Mercury*, speaking for the extra-hot fire-eaters, continues to rave, because Gov. Pickens will listen to words of hope and promise from Washington. The squabble is growing interesting every day; and, as things now go on, we may safely expect, on one of these hazy mornings, to wake up, and find that the valiant hero of *The Mercury* has during the night gone down and captured Fort Sumter, and put the entire garrison to the sword, single-handed. His next exploit would be to hang Gov. Pickens and his counselors for treason. There really is no knowing what the man may not do. For some days past, or rather nights, he has been greatly troubled about "mysterious boats," with "muffled oars," in the piteous darkness, prowling around Morris Island, and actually did induce the guard at one of the batteries, a night or two ago to fire on something or other, which the editor this morning avers was a boat full of spies from Fort Sumter. He says, moreover, that there was afterwards heard a "wailing in the water," and therefore concludes that some one must have been killed. I do really believe there is reason to fear that the score of chaps in Fort Sumter will yet be the death of the whole three thousand of the picked chivalry who surround them. The wonder is that the "mysterious boats" with "muffled oars" did not put them to flight. The same frightful apparitions, the editor avers, have been seen in the neighborhood of Fort Moultrie, and startled the garrison half out of their wits. Some say that the commander of that Fort keeps his batteries in a state of instant readiness, and men with matches all lighted, in anticipation of an invasion of Sullivan's Island by Capt. Foster and four picked men from Sumter.

Now I do not undertake to assert the correctness or falsity of the editor's visions; indeed, I am not disposed to disclose all I do know on the subject; but it occurs to me that if Fort Sumter's men can prove about the harbor, night after night, the police-boats of the Revolutionists are not worth much, and further, that the landing of reinforcements in open boats at Fort Sumter from a vessel outside, would not be a difficult thing to accomplish. I have never doubted it. Who knows but that, after all, this has been done, and that the "mysterious boats," with "muffled oars," may not have been engaged in the business? I do not wish unnecessarily to alarm any one, but suggest that the days of wooden horses are not yet extinct.

[Mem.—One o'clock by the chime in St. Michael's tower; the sun shines brightly, and there is a good prospect of the weather clearing up. *Courier* and *Mercury*, please take notice.]

There is a dead flatness in the market of incidents to-day. There is a pause in the Rebellion, equally painful and expensive. The Charlestonians are making another attempt to get the \$30,000 item inserted in the Appropriation bill. There is a good prospect of success, with the restriction that the money shall not be used so long as Fort Sumter is in Federal hands. The Legislature will adjourn at one o'clock on Monday.

The Revolutionists in the Legislature have a deal of trouble in fixing on what the "national flag of South Carolina" (what a misnomer)

shall be. They have fixed it two or three times, and as often unfixed it again, till they have made patch-work of it resembling a Dutch bed-spread. Perhaps one would do as well.

There are two men in Waterbury jail for drilling negroes at night preparatory to an insurrection, and one man is in jail at Columbia, charged with a conspiracy to fire the city. The pot begins to boil in a good many places.

LATER.—The cat is out of the bag! The report is current that Fort Sumter has actually received a reinforcement. Those "mysterious boats" with "muffled oars" probably did the business! If this report should turn out to be true, what will the chivalry do? Could they expect anything better of a commander who cheated them out of their senses in the Fort Moultrie evacuation affair, than that he would cheat them again by taking in reinforcements right under their own noses? Clearly, Major Anderson was no more bound to rest without reinforcements in Fort Sumter than he was to stay in Fort Moultrie one month ago. As I said before, I am not disposed to disclose all I know on the subject, but let me look at the circumstances. Within the last three or four days we have had reports of a steamer being off the mouth of the harbor. What could a steamer be doing there, "laying low," for so long a time, without she had business with Fort Sumter? Next, we know that Maj. Anderson has, during that time, been sending away the mechanics, the women, and the children from the fort. What has been doing that for, except to make room for reinforcements? Then we have the "mysterious boats," with "muffled oars." What can they be but the very boats engaged in conveying the reinforcements, which the aforesaid steamer brought?

Three o'clock precisely.—The sky is cloudless; the air is deliciously soft, and the weather matches.

POSTSCRIPT.—5 p. m.—I add this P. S. to record the fact that there has been a change in the weather. The wind is in the north, is chilly, and there is every appearance of rain. I also record the fact, which I could not well do if I were in New-York, that a fine company of upward of 100 soldiers have just passed up. Their flag looked as much like the genuine Red, White, and Blue as two apples look alike. If it is the new flag of Sovereign South Carolina, then I accept the resemblance as a good indication—the same as I would be sure there was, after all, something good in the scapegrace who continued to carry the picture of his mother in his bosom.

FROM MARYLAND.

SECESSION BACKING DOWN.

From Our Own Correspondent.

BALTIMORE, Monday, Jan. 28, 1861.

As the *Slavery-Extension* Rebellion progresses, developments are daily coming to light disclosing its real purpose and character, and it will not be many days before the blindest of the blind will come to see that it is a purely political demonstration for the overthrow of the Republican party. It is simply a game of brag, and will be played out, even to the effusion of blood, if necessary to insure success.

Two cases that have just come to my knowledge are eminently suggestive of the true character of the game.

An eminent eargoon of the United States Army, a native of South Carolina, recently went home with the intention of resigning, supposing that the rebels were in earnest. To his astonishment, on conferring with the men high in Secession authority, he was advised against taking this step, and given to understand that the whole affair was intended to operate a political revolution of Free-State sentiment on the Slavery question, which it was certain of effecting at an early period.

Another case. A South Carolina midshipman, at Annapolis, was advised not to resign by the Superintendent, but his reply was that he knew what he was about; that he had the promise of the member of Congress from his District of being reappointed, so soon as South Carolina got back into the Union, which would not be long!

Intimations are rife hereabout that the seceders will all come back at a very early day, even if they do not succeed in breaking the Republican party to pieces, though they will all hold out till after the inauguration. They lament the failure of their scheme to seize upon the Federal Capital, but they still hope they will get the door open to the extension of Slavery Mexico-ward.

The Presidential politics of Gov. Hicks's Compromise Committee to meet those from other States, at the instance of Virginia, on the 4th of February, at Washington, are as follows: Reverdy Johnson, (Doug.); Augustus W. Bradford, William F. Goldsborough and J. Dixon Roman, (Bell); W. W. Cresfield, (Breck.). These gentlemen, so far as they have spoken, deny the right of Secession as a constitutional right, and profess to be earnestly in favor of perpetuating the Federal Union, and keeping Maryland in the United States, provided always, that the Republican party will consent to let Slavery run riot over all Territory south of 36° 30', both now acquired and hereafter to be conquered from Mexico, by the Federal power! If they can't get this, they will take less, but they must have something. But it is due to them to say, they do not threaten to plunge Maryland into the gulf of disunion, should the Republicans insist on standing by the verdict of November 6, 1860. Mr. Reverdy Johnson, I learn, is willing to accept that verdict as the law of the land, and to hold the Republican party responsible for the administration of the Government. If this be so, and he can bring the Southern portion of the Consultative College up to this Constitutional level, he will save the Union indeed!

"Old Caesar's" letter, as Gov. Hicks is affectionately called at home, to Mr. Curry, the Alabama treason-monger, has completely unhorsed the rebel sympathizers in this State. It portrays so truthfully and vividly the evils that await us, if we hitch on to the South Carolina go-cart, that people are beginning to be alarmed. You will have seen how heretofore the Governor and this letter have been attacked by the Baltimore State Senator in last Saturday's *Sun* newspaper. He rudely asks, what meat "our Caesar" has been feeding upon, to give him such an antipathy to Secession? People in our city are strengthened in their conclusions that the Governor is right, by the course of the Baltimore State Senator, whose hostility to a measure is a pretty sure sign of its merits.

The change predicted in one of my letters as about to take place in *The Baltimore Exchange* newspaper has occurred. Mr. Fitzhugh has retired, and the concern has passed into the hands of W. Wilkins Glenn, esq. In commenting on

an extract from my notice of the contemplated change, it says it will be independent, and go for the Union, provided the Republicans will consent to a satisfactory compromise of their principles. Such I understand to be the English of its position. We shall probably miss one of the able, though eccentric pens whose contributions used to adorn its columns—I mean that of S. Teakle Wallis, esq.

All the Federal officers in this city, I learn, are pretty fair Union men; that is, opposed to the rebel doctrine of Secession, though they all want a compromise, except the Collector of the Port, Judge Mason, who seems to be infected with the prevailing epidemic, judging from a piece of his, recently published in *The Sun* newspaper, over his own signature. It is rumored, that, at a collation recently given by him in the Custom-House, on the occasion of the completion of the fire repairs of that building, he and other gentlemen talked Secession at a great rate, as our only remedy against Republicanism. If it be true that Mr. Buchanan openly avowed it to be his wish, a day or two ago, that "Maryland should stand still and not budge an inch," people think he ought forthwith to allow Mr. Mason to retire to private life, notwithstanding he is the President's bosom friend. This is no time for doubtful men to be in office anywhere.

The movers in a volunteer State Convention are still struggling in some of the counties to get the ball in motion. In Talbot, there are two parties of them, one for secession anyhow, and the other for deliberation. In Cecil, the fire-eaters were voted down by the Unionists on one occasion last week. The Hagerstown people had a large Union meeting on Saturday. But the great trouble is, that nobody takes the bull by the horns, and resolves upon maintaining the Union unconditionally. All our Unionism is based upon compromise of some sort, and people are stimulated to this course by the apparent division in the councils of the Republicans in Congress.

If that party in Congress had unanimously made known their determination not to touch the popular verdict of last November, the conservative element in all the Slave States would have rallied at once to the side of the Federal Government.

The most noted event of the past week in our city, is the resignation of Mr. Milton Whitney, State District Attorney. He has been the object of a fierce political and personal persecution, for some time past, until it culminated in sundry indictments against him for malfeasance in office, on one of which he was recently acquitted, while the others were quashed. It is thought that J. Stockett Mathews or Mr. Cochrane will be his successor.

The failure of the Government to meet the regular payments of the army and navy, at distant posts, is causing much inconvenience, and ought to stimulate the Senate to the immediate passage of the Tariff bill before them. An empty treasury, however, is one of the levers by which the compromisers hope to bring the Republicans to terms.

People of all shades of political opinion here, seem to regard the fall of Fort Sumter and Fort Pickens as events sure to take place before the 4th of March, either by force or by negotiation. The general opinion is, that the main anxiety of Mr. Buchanan and his party is to prevent a bloody collision during the rest of his term of office, but the braggers in the secedant States do not share in his anxiety, for they think that the shedding of blood will facilitate the submission of Republicans to their demands.

Your John Cochrane is to repeat his compromise Union speech before the Ladies' Mite Society of this City, on Wednesday evening next. This rebuking of sin by Satan is quite entertaining.

MISCELLANEOUS.

LETTER FROM JOHN MINOR BOTTS.

RICHMOND, Va., Jan. 24, 1861.

TO CHARLES PALMER, THOMAS SANFORD, E. T. JAMES, MARTIN REYNOLDS, SAMUEL JOHNSON, and several hundred others of the citizens of Richmond.

GENTLEMEN: I have seen your card in *The Whig* of this morning, addressed to Messrs. McFarlane, Johnson, and myself, asking that we will represent you in the Convention now to be held in this State.

So far as my name is concerned I have to say, that I have neither sought nor desired to occupy the position, which I regard as one of far more responsibility and importance than any with which my name has ever been, or can ever hereafter be associated, for, as far as the influence of Virginia can control it, a single vote in that Convention may save or destroy an Empire in the future, such as the world never has beheld and never will behold again. Yet Richmond has always been true to me, and I shall be false to my own name when I prove false to Richmond, and therefore I can shrink from no responsibility that it may be the pleasure of her citizens to bestow upon me. Still I cannot accept this important trust without first enabling you to understand distinctly, in advance, what line of policy I should pursue and recommend for your adoption, and then, if defeated, I shall have no cause for regret on my own account, and shall be relieved of a very responsible labor, and it will require less time than it did in 1854, '55, and '56, to find out who has consulted your interests most faithfully.

The absence of all right on the part of one State to separate herself from the other thirty-two, when no pretense is set up that there is a correlative right on the part of the thirty-two to separate themselves from the one, is, to my mind, an incomprehensible logical absurdity, which I have already argued in your presence during the late canvass, and which need not be repeated here.

That the time has arrived when the public voice, and indeed the public welfare, demands that they shall be a satisfactory and final adjustment of all questions of discord between the two sections of the country, that we may live in peace hereafter, no one will dispute. The question is, what ought to be satisfactory to us, the Southern section, constituting, as we do, the complaining party in this case.

For myself, I am prepared to insist upon every jot or tittle of right that the security or the honor of Virginia will entitle her to claim under the Constitution as it is. I am willing to vote and take as much more as the North may be disposed to yield. If I have not heretofore claimed as much as others, it was not that I was unwilling they should obtain and enjoy it, but because I did not believe it would be granted, or that we were entitled to demand it as of right, and therefore I never have consented, and never will consent, to make the existence or destruction of this Government depend upon any abstract or impracticable question, that may or may not arise, outside of the Constitution, such as is now proposed, of carrying Slavery, by constitutional means, from Mexico or South America, which I trust may never be acquired at all.

There is nothing I can do that I will not do to avert the utter dissolution that will assuredly follow in the train of disunion, rebellion, and civil war. I will go as far as any man here will or can go to settle by compromise or negotiation every question of distribution of our National Councils. I am even free to say that there is no compromise that has been, or can be proposed, that will prove satisfactory to the North and South, and restore harmony to the country, that will not meet with my cordial support, and, except as a matter of curiosity, I would agree and have no interest in this Government that are not identified with those around me, and whatever will

satisfy them will satisfy me. I do not set myself up as a maker of laws or constitutions, to which all others must bend and yield. Still, I am not without my own views on a course of adjustment upon all questions of Constitutional interpretation, and these could be done by making a case, on each disputed point, the immediate decision of the Supreme Court, which is the tribunal established for that purpose, and let its decision stand as final and conclusive on all parties, and then we can see what party it is that is not willing to live under the present form of government, fairly administered.

I do not believe that, since the world was in a state of chaos, there ever was, or that there ever will be again, so general and universal an upheaving of society, so total and desolating a disturbance of all the social, moral, political and industrial elements of a people, for such slight and insufficient causes, as this country now exhibits to the gaze of the astonished nations of the earth; every one of which causes, by prudence, forbearance and discretion, if taken out of the hands of selfish and aspiring or disappointed politicians, and intrusted to the people at the polls, and who are guided by the Crittenden and Higher resolutions, may be settled amicably, harmoniously and satisfactorily to the Union and under the Constitution, within the next sixty days, while there is not one that will not be a thousand-fold aggravated when we go out of the country, to the great detriment of the whole organization of the Government, the Army, the Navy, the Treasury, the public lands in all the States as well as all the Territories, in the full possession of the Republican party, from whose apprehended designs the Secessionists are for running off and leaving behind them all they claim. As the friends of the John Brown raid, since your year, and the scenes through which we are now passing, let us never again have a word to say about the extirpation of the French, who, compared with us, are an immovable and unimpeachable race of people.

Now, I believe I constitute a fair type or specimen of the actual condition of every man in the Southern States in a legal, political, and constitutional sense, and I find myself in the full, free, and perfect exercise of every blessing, and of every right, of a personal nature, that I have enjoyed since I came into the world. I am also in the possession and enjoyment of whatever property I may own, and nobody, as far as I know, proposes to disturb me or dispossess me of it, nor can I be dispossessed by any man being beyond the course of law. How long this state of things may continue, Omniscience only can tell, but there are any number of these particulars, in a worse condition than myself, if there is, if the instance can be presented, of any one man out of the ten million of the white population of the Southern States who is laboring under any oppression, wrong, injustice, or grievance, that cannot be redressed in the Union, and can be redressed out of the Union, then I will pledge myself to vote for disunion whenever the question comes up; but if no such case can be presented, I will never consent to give up this Government, the work of men "whose lives we never shall look upon again," for any other government which the destroyers of this are likely to substitute in its stead. I will not destroy the house in which I live, and which protects me from the blasts and storms of winter when not in use, but I will not let the timber be cut, with which to erect another. I will not tear down the works of Washington, of Madison, of Franklin, of Carroll, of Morris, and of Pinckney, to take upon trust the clumsy machinery of Yancey, and Rhett, and Pickens, and Toombs, and Davis. I will not surrender the Government until I know that a better one is provided for me.

When I see in the distance the frightful and appalling consequences of dissolution and civil war, which many will not see until the reality is brought to their own firesides and hearthstones, where our wives and daughters, and all that is cherished and held dear, is at stake, I do not permit myself to feel that both parties will shudder and recoil at its approach, and come to honorable terms of settlement. For one I shall never despair of the Republic.

When I see that upon the secession of any or all the Southern States, the President is left with no executive power, but is left a helpless, impotent, and, before his God, to *prostrate*, protect, and defend the Constitution, and that that Constitution declares "the laws of the United States to be the Supreme Law of the land," which he "shall take care to see faithfully executed," and places the Army and Navy of the United States under his control, and provides for calling forth the militia, to enable him to execute the laws, and suppress insurrections, I cannot doubt that the declaration of secession, however much it may be deplored, will necessarily impose upon the Government the obligation of resorting to such measures as will enable him to see that the laws are faithfully executed, and which was too firmly established in the days of President Jackson, by the legislation of 1832, ever to be overturned while the Government endures. I only speak of this as an existing fact, which is not likely, and hardly possible, to be changed, and which I do not intend to give to it, and while I cannot doubt the power, I would, as your representative in the Convention, cheerfully unite in any recommendation or recommendation against the exercise of the power.

When I see, too, that without the power to strike a blow in resistance or defense, without the means to vindicate the rights of the States, and without the right to do so, and all the glories and bravado of light-headed and flippant would-be patriots cannot prevent it; when I see that a single steam frigate, stationed at the Cape of Virginia, will as effectually block up and destroy the entire commerce of Virginia and Maryland as if they were surrounded by icebergs in the Arctic Ocean, while we have no naval force with which to dislodge or remove the blockade; when I see that the commerce of every other Southern State may be cut off in the same way, and by the same means, by sending one or more war steamers to block up the ports of Cape Henry, Charleston, Savannah, and the mouth of the Mississippi River, while the commerce of every Free State, in the Valley of the Mississippi, is left open by means of rail-road, lake and canal communication with New-York; when I see that of 3,500,000 militia men armed with arms, and with the means of transport, and with no negroes to guard at home, and the South only about 247,000, with our wives and daughters to protect and our negroes to watch; when I see that upon all constitutional obligations being broken down there must be incessant and exhausting hostilities carried on, and that the Southern States will be reduced to a state of anarchy, and that Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee and Missouri will speedily become Free States, "hitched on" to a Confederacy of Slave States, from which it is even now proposed they should then be torn away; when I see this State groaning under a load of debt, and the bonds of the Southern States and all her sources of revenue cut off, and without the right to obtain a dollar in any market in the world on any terms, as will be her condition in a state of rebellion and civil war; when I see nothing but bankruptcy and distress staring every man in the face; when I see a State, which has been the seat of the most magnificent and glorious people, by the incoherent haste of an hour's excitement or for misplaced sympathy for a State, that we were told in advance would "hitch on," and "precipitate us into a revolution which we could not control," then I can see nothing but absolute ruin and desolation, and all in common with our Southern brethren, and our honor requires us to encounter, I say, if this work is to be done it must be performed by other hands than mine, for I would not for all the honors and offices and wealth of the world have such a crime resting on my soul.

I have said I would take any compromise that would restore peace to the country, but it is not to be disputed that there are those in this State, and others in the South, who do not mean to be satisfied with any concessions or compromises that can be offered. They are for disunion *per se*, and have been—Mr. Rhett acknowledges—for 30 years. For them I have nothing to say, and I do not